

Strawberry Patch RC Pilots Club: Meeting Minutes for 15 Oct 2023

The meeting was called to order at 11:01 AM by the club president, Phil Thain. There were 20 members present.

Phil provided the members with a status report:

- Construction projects (shed extension, dock railing, picnic benches) are put off until next season. We were not able to make progress earlier in the season because of weather and a variety of other reasons. It is now too late to attempt them this season. As soon as the weather breaks in the spring, possibly in March, Phil will call for work party volunteers. If we are able to get a big enough group together, we will also be able to help Steve with other spring tasks.
- FRIA update: John providing a summary: Our initial application was denied by the FAA. The reason given is that our location close to the Sanford airport was an “unacceptable safety risk”. AMA contacted us immediately and explained that the FAA’s concern is not so much with our club. FAA’s issue is that if they designate a FRIA area, then anyone can fly in that area without a remote ID module. AMA suggested that we provide supporting evidence that we restrict access to the field to the public. We forwarded photos of our sign, which clearly states flying is restricted to members only. We also submitted pictures of our roped-off access points at both ends of the ramp and an ariel photo showing how far away the field is from Whichers Mill road. AMA resubmitted our application with this info. This past Thursday FAA again denied us. They gave the identical reason, making no mention of the photos we had provided. AMA then asked us for additional mitigating info. We stressed that we have been an AMA chartered club since at least 2003 and have had no safety issues with the airport. We said we are willing to put up additional signage and barriers. We requested advice based on their knowledge of other clubs located close to airports that have been approved. We also asked at what point do they feel escalating to our US Senator will help. This email went out on Friday, so we have not heard back yet. Phil has also ordered a security camera which we can set up if that would be helpful.

It was suggested that if we are not approved the club purchase a few ID modules which members could use when they fly at the field. Folks seem to think this was a reasonable idea that we can follow up on if necessary.

Phil then asked for the Treasurer/Secretary report. John reported that the club has a balance of \$1408.99 in the checking account and \$1,926.07 in the reserve account. Since the last meeting, the club spent \$250.00 for porta-potty rental and 125.55 for website security software.

Dues for the 2024 season may be paid at any time. Deadline for payment is the first meeting of 2024 (May 4th). Details for making a payment are at the bottom of these minutes

Phil then asked for the Field Marshal's report. Steve is planning to fertilize the runway in the next week or so. He is planning to take down the windsock and flag by the end of the month. Mowing will be on an as-needed basis through the end of the month. He plans to roll the field in the spring.

Phil then asked for the Safety Officer's report. Tyler has not heard of any safety concerns. We need to continue to follow our safety practices, eg., stay within a flight station when flying and **keep below 400 ft.** He asked what current thinking is on the height of the flight stations. Some like the higher stations and others the shorter station. We agreed to shorten one more station, leaving one tall and two short.

Phil then turned the meeting over to the club secretary, John, for the annual election of officers.

John announced that all of the current officers: President Phil Thain, Vice-President Paul Ouellette, Safety Officer Tyler McCormack and Secretary/Treasurer/AMA contact John Choroszy are willing to continue in their current roles but welcome anyone who wishes to run for an office position. No one expressed interest, either before or during the meeting. There was a motion to re-elect the current officers for another year. This was seconded. All members present voted in favor. Phil, Paul, Tyler, and John are re-elected for another year. Phil confirmed the continued appointment of Steve as Field Marshall.

Phil then asked if there was any new business.

- We voted to approve rental of a Porta-potty again next season, beginning the first of May
- Rich Whicker, a new member, introduced himself. Rich flew here back in 2006 and is looking forward to getting back into flying at the club. He is a flight instructor at Sanford and flies models off Estes Pond. We welcomed Rich!
- Bob Palermo showed us a CG balancing jig that he recently built and has been using. Based on positive feedback from members Bob decided to build an improved and slightly larger jig which he will donate and leave at the field. Thanks Bob!

There was nothing else to report, so the business portion of the meeting was adjourned at 11:35 AM.

John Choroszy, Secretary

Information for making your 2024 membership payment:

Dues are \$50.00 for the year. Deadline for payment of dues is the first meeting of 2024, May 4th. Note that Club by-laws and AMA rules require that all members have a current AMA membership. You may pay your dues by any of the following:

- \$50.00 cash payment at the May 4th meeting
- Check for \$50.00 made out to Strawberry Patch RC Pilots. You can bring the check to the first meeting or mail it to John:

John Choroszy
7 Brigham Ln
Wells, Maine 04090

- \$50.00 Venmo, Zelle, or PayPal payment to John Choroszy, using either my email (jchorosz@gmail.com) or phone number (207-450-8497) for the address. If prompted for a choice, please specify this as a payment to

friend or family. If you specify it as a payment to a business then we are charged a service fee.

Addendum: Our meeting dates for 2024 are May 4th, July 6th (includes club picnic), August 24th, and October 5th (includes election of officers). Meetings are on Saturday at 11:00am